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NSC BRIEFING ON ICFTU CONGRESS

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1. The most significant development at last month's Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions was the decision to establish a Director of Organization and step-up the ICFTU's anti-Communist activities.

2. Since its organization in 1949, the ICFTU has made substantial progress in uniting the free trade unions of the world. Today, it claims 109 affiliates in 75 countries with a combined membership of 54,500,000. However, its financial and staff resources have proved inadequate for the task of combatting effectively Communist infiltration and manipulation of labor movements, especially in the under-developed areas. Some of its member organizations have insisted that the ICFTU could meet the Communist threat most effectively by concentrating its efforts upon the improvement of social and economic conditions of workers in these areas. However, the increasing tempo of the "cold war", which has resulted in a number of established trade union centers being captured and perverted by the Communists and their fellow-travelers, have demonstrated the inadequacy of this approach. Hence, the significance of the ICFTU's decision to create a Director of Organization.

3. This individual, who will be appointed by and responsible to the Executive Board, will be charged with the task of organizing and strengthening trade unions particularly in the under-developed areas, as well as directing a more aggressive anti-Communist campaign. These activities will replace and enlarge upon the functions of the present Regional Activities Fund Committee, which will be abolished. The Director of Organization will be selected by a committee appointed by Becu and consisting of Meany,

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Geddes, and Khatib of Pakistan. It is expected to announce its choice in September. Among the candidates being mentioned are Becu himself and Pat Conroy, Canadian labor attache in Washington. This move is a considerable victory for the AFofL, which originally wished to replace J.H. Oldenbroek as Secretary General. Failing this, they have succeeded in removing the regional activities from Oldenbroek's control.

5. The German delegation came to Vienna under a mandate from its annual convention to resist any proposals for rearmament prior to the reunification of Germany. The Japanese delegation was armed with a resolution calling for a ban on all mass-destruction weapons. Carefully avoiding any mention of "rearmament", the U.S. delegations submitted a resolution calling on the democracies to "improve their efforts to attain collective security . . . to strengthen their capacity to deter and prevent aggression and war through adequate defense measures." The resolution also called for a system of enforceable international control and inspection of atomic resources and projects and denounced the Soviet Union for opposing the establishment of such a system. The resolution was supported by both the

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German and Japanese delegations. Moreover, as a result of an American proposal, tentative plans are being made by the Executive Board for a Labor Conference on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy to precede the UN conference scheduled for August at Geneva.

6. The ICFTU accepted into its membership the Union Marocaine du Travail (UMT) which was organized in defiance of the French law prohibiting indigenous trade unions in Morocco. Under this law, native workers are required to join existing French trade unions which, in many cases, has forced them into the Communist-controlled CGT. The ICFTU action is significant for the following reasons:

a. By reorganizing an indigenous trade union, the ICFTU appears implicitly to be lending its support to nationalist aspirations and condemning colonialism. (The ICFTU has been attacked strongly by the Communist-dominated WFTU for allegedly supporting colonialism.)

b. The ICFTU is now in a position to support the UMT openly as one of its own affiliates, in direct opposition to French colonial policy. At the same time, this action opens the way for other ICFTU affiliates, especially U.S. labor organizations, to assist the UMT. This could lead to a conflict between the French authorities on the one hand and the ICFTU and U.S. labor organizations on the other hand.

7. The ICFTU rebuked two international trade secretariats (Miners' International Federation and International Federation of Building and Woodworkers) for accepting Tito-controlled affiliates into their membership.

8. Irving Brown, AFOFL representative, led the exploitation on the floor of the Congress of a news report that nine Indian delegates to a

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May Day celebration in Peiping had become so disillusioned that they had cancelled the remainder of their visit and returned to India.

9. The WFTU's invitation for "unity of action" by all international labor organizations was rejected summarily by the ICFTU Secretary General who suggested that the WFTU's affiliates make a genuine effort to introduce free trade unionism in their own countries (i.e. those behind the Iron Curtain) before making any further overtures of this kind. Several of the delegates, in discussing the Austrian treaty, pointed out that the WFTU headquarters in Vienna was brought there against the wishes of the Austrian Government and people and had remained there only under the protection of Russian bayonets. There have been reports of unknown reliability that the WFTU might remove its headquarters to one of the Satellite countries when the Russian troops are withdrawn from Austria.

10. One of the most noteworthy aspects of this Congress was the emergence of U.S. leadership in ICFTU affairs. Factors that contributed to this development were: Strong indications by the combined U.S. delegations that they intended to remain in the ICFTU and make it a more effective organization; the forthcoming merger between the AFofL and CIO; an awareness by the delegates of heavy U.S. financial contributions; the atmosphere of unity that prevailed among the U.S. and Canadian delegations led by Meany, AFofL and Potofsky, CIO; the lack of friction between U.S. and British delegations. Although some resentment was reported by among the smaller delegations it appeared that the U.S. delegation had been generally successful in steering a number of controversial resolutions and proposals to a successful conclusion without antagonizing or isolating any of the key delegations. As a result of their efforts, the ICFTU is committed to a more vigorous program of anti-Communist activities.

ICFTU

CIO and TUC withdrew from the WFTU on
18 January 1949. The ICFTU was officially
established at a Congress in London on 7 Dec. 1949.

The main AFofL & CIO delegates were as
follows to the Vienna Conference of the ICFTU:

AFofL:

George Meany
Irving Brown
David Dubinsky
Jay Lovestone

DAVE BECK

CIO

James Carey
Jacob Potofsky
O. A. Knight
Victor Reuther
Michael Ross
McDonald
Emil Rieve

Thos. Kennedy